

<b>TITLE:</b>	Nicomedia (Izmit)
<b>1. Name:</b>	
I. Current name:	Izmit
II. Ancient name:	Nicomedia
III. Medieval name:	Nicomedia
IV. History of the name:	
<b>2. Place:</b>	
I. Country:	Turkey
II. Geopolitical unit:	Kocaeli Province
III. Administrative subdivision:	Administrative center of the Kocaeli Province as well as the Metropolitan Municipality.
IV. Location:	Izmit is situated in the North-Western part of Turkey, at the distance of 91 km E-SE of Istanbul, at the head of the Gulf of Izmit, in the sea of Marmara. The Kocaeli region extends between the Black Sea to the north and the Bay of Izmit to the south, opening the city of Izmit up to both the Black Sea and the Sea of Marmara. Its neighboring cities are Bursa and Yalova to the south, Istanbul to the west and Sakarya to the east.
<b>3. Foundation date:</b>	Nicomedia was founded about 264 B.C. by Nicomedes I of Bithynia on the site of the Greek colony of Olbia.
<b>4. Current condition:</b>	Izmit area is developed intensively and hosts a variety of leading industrial sectors including chemical industry, paper mills, oil refineries and shipping, and trade related facilities. The capital city of the province, Izmit, is also the main centre of this activity and counts as one of Turkey's principal industrial centres.
<b>5. History:</b>	<p>History of Nicomedia is very rich. First, the capital of the Bithynian kingdom, and later of the Roman province of Bithynia, Nicomedia was astride the great highroad connecting Europe and the East, and was a port as well. The importance of Nicomedia was also due to its marble-quarries and the marble trade centered in Nicomedia was famous throughout the whole region.</p> <p>In 29 BC, Roman emperor Augustus allowed the Bithynians to consecrate a precinct to his name in the town. Later on, the city's buildings and water supply came repeatedly to the attention of emperor Trajan and Pliny when the latter was governor of Bithynia. Several Roman emperors visited and wintered there, a garrison existed, and the city housed a <i>statio</i> of the imperial post and a fleet headquarters.</p> <p>Sacked by the Goths in 256, Nicomedia will live its golden age during the reign of the emperor Diocletian (240-311). In his attempt to solve the crisis of the third century, the emperor created the Tetrarchy: a team of four emperors governing the empire from separate regional bases. Diocletian ruled the eastern provinces from Nicomedia upgrading the city to its capital. He adorned the city with sumptuous buildings of local and imperial significance, making it a center of learning but also a scene of the persecution of the Christians.</p> <p>Lactanius (240-320) reports that the emperor constructed a palace, a circus, a mint (provided coinage for the whole diocese of Pontus), a</p>

weapon factory (produced shields and heavy armor and was still functioning in the seventh century), and houses for his wife and daughter. Other sources confirm that the emperor was attempting to make Nicomedia equal to Rome and that he was responsible for the erection of a new circuit of walls. He also enlarged the Antonine baths and commissioned the construction of the basilica.

This extensive reconstruction gave Nicomedia the appearance of an imperial capital, with its two essential buildings: the palace and the circus and other imposing public structures. The city was surrounded by a wall that stretched for about 4 miles to encompass the acropolis, the steep hillside and the shoreline. New capital was the center of a vast network of trade; the shipping routes led to Nicomedia from all parts of the Empire. It also received an antique harbor.

The fate of the city was sealed during the reign of Constantine the Great and the foundation of Constantinople in 330 as an imposing new capital. As a sign of the change, a great many statues, including one of Diocletian, were transported from the old capital-Nicomedia to the new capital-Constantinople. Nevertheless, Nicomedia was not abandoned overnight nor was it reduced to insignificance. According to Libanius, for instance, the city was still attracting students and was even becoming rival city to Athens.

But, several earthquakes in the fourth and fifth century greatly reduced its importance. Some rebuilding of the city resulted from the care of the emperor Theodosius II who stayed in the city in 397, 398 and 426.

As movements of troops passed by land through Nicomedia, the emperor Justinian (527-565) made major improvements to the road leading to the east, he built a monumental bridge which still stands over the Sangarius and paved a long stretch of road which had previously been difficult to pass. After the earthquake of 554, Justinian rebuilt the great baths of Antonius.

Nicomedia suffered from the invasions and turmoil of the Dark Ages and shrank to become a place noted for its ruins, a powerful fortress on a high hill overlooking the sea. It nevertheless remained a major port and road station during the rule of the Macedonian dynasty. The importance of the city was not only military. In the *De Thematis* written by Emperor Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus in about 930, Nicomedia appears as the first city and metropolis of the province. And, the city will remain the seat of the metropolitan bishop of Bithynia until the end of the Byzantine period.

In his *Account of Asia Minor*, Odo of Deuil (1147) described Nicomedia as a place largely overgrown with splendid ruins of a distant past. A well-defended castle on a high hill, where the city was established after it withdrew from its extensive site by the sea. Apparently, it continued to function as a port, it would have a fort by the shore to protect the ships and the commerce.

After the fall of Constantinople in 1204 and during the Latin rule until 1261, the location of Nicomedia became very strategic because the city found itself midway between the new capital, Nicaea, and Constantinople. Therefore, the city appears frequently in the annals of that period.

After the reconquest of Constantinople in 1261 and during the last centuries of Byzantine empire, Nicomedia's fortifications played a major role in preserving the city and defending the approaches of Constantinople.

The fate of the city was sealed in 1337 when the Ottoman troops entered the city. A new period of its history began: Nicomedia

	<p>became Izmit and the capital of a large province of the Ottoman empire. Natural disasters continued like the devastating earthquake in 1509 that destroyed a great part of the city, including the walls along the shore.</p> <p>By the early modern period, Izmit was a major center for shipping, especially of wood and contained many caravansarays. It was a station on the military highway across Anatolia. It also had a shipyard. Numerous travelers passed through Izmit, especially in the 17<sup>th</sup> century and, among them, Evliya Çelebi who mentioned its fortress.</p>
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<p><b>6. Description:</b></p>	<p>Literary sources rather than archaeological remains provide the history of antique and byzantine Nicomedia. The ancient city rests under the bustling industrial city of Izmit and the remains of its glorious past stand out only sporadically and very partially.</p> <p>Inscriptions, coins, and texts record numerous ancient temples like a Temple of Roma (29 B.C., the meeting place of the provincial assembly) or a Temple of Demeter, and satellite structures, in a large rectangular precinct on the hill visible from the harbor. Then, the theater is mentioned, a colonnaded street (a few bits were once seen) probably leading from Demeter's precinct to the harbor, and a forum. A palace, an armory, a mint, and new shipyards were built during the reign of Diocletian. Evidence of necropolis abounds, and about 8 km N of the city are tumuli which may be the tombs of the Bithynian kings.</p> <p>In the Hellenistic era, the theatre would have been situated in an imposing central location which also proved a view over the city. During the Survey 2005 and Survey 2006 (Survey of Kocaeli and its District, Kocaeli University-Izmit), some significant remains of the theatre were discovered. Although it is not certain whether the structure was a Hellenistic one, the slope on which the theatre was constructed certainly proves the most breathtaking view of the Gulf of Izmit, a feature associated with theaters of the Hellenistic era.</p> <p>At the same time, the architectural remains that were still standing, the additions from Roman imperial period allow to classify the theater of Nicomedia as Hellenistic-Roman theatre like the theatre of Ephesus. The walls of the theatre were made entirely of limestone, built from large blocks and without the use of mortar. The surviving standing elements of the structure consisted of seven entrances to the theatre, all in the form of vaults.</p> <p>In 1968, the remains of the foundations of a structure named 'the people's underground depot' (located on Istanbul Cadde) in the Tepecik neighborhood of Izmit were discovered. For the immense size of the Corinthian style capitals and columns, it was concluded that this was impressive nymphaion. In addition, 2005 and 2006 Surveys identified a number of aqueducts and canals that had not been referred to before.</p> <p>2005 and 2006 Surveys explored the center of the city, starting with the shore in the south. Within the Borusan plant, as well as in the adjacent SEKA plant, a large number of architectural elements were located. In the western part of this area, namely in the western corner of the Mannesmann pipe plant, 2005 and 2006 surveys revealed colossal architectural structures formed from piles of stone blocks which had been pushed to the sides during the construction of the plant. These finds confirm the hypothesis that this area of the SEKA plant, located behind the Hellenistic and Roman harbor, contains the most important buildings of ancient Nicomedia.</p>
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	<p>Despite all destruction that has occurred, the colossal architectural remains uncovered during the construction of the SEKA plan in the 1930's, yet which still survive, indicate that this area was once the most important ancient center.</p> <p>In the area between SEKA and TEIAS, clearly shaped big blocks of stone were found and it was observed that these blocks had been joined together using a sturdy mortar. Taking into account this building technique and the close proximity of this structure to the coast, this area which is known as 'the ancient road' may have been either part of the harbor complex or part of the breakwater.</p>
<p><b>7. Harbor:</b></p>	<p>Nicomedia established its reputation primarily thanks to its natural harbor, protected by the natural environment.</p> <p>Parts of the harbor wall, which could be seen until a generation ago, were of typically Roman brickwork.</p>
<p><b>8. Fortification:</b></p>	<p>The walls contain no inscriptions helping the archaeologist establish their precise chronology.</p> <p>But the analysis of the masonry allows their history to be traced from the earliest days of Nicomedia until Ottoman times. The walls of Nicomedia have been studied extensively by Clive Foss.</p> <p>The earlier defenses were those of the Hellenistic city, built in fine limestone ashlar blocks which find no counterpart in later work. They included a citadel on the hilltop whose walls apparently followed a circuit very similar to that of the later Byzantine fortress. The well-cut limestone blocks appear in almost all parts of the later circuit, as well as in one section of the Walls of Diocletian. Whether the original fortification had other parts, and whether it extended down to the seashore has not been determined.</p> <p>The greatest defenses, in terms of length and volume of material, were the long walls identified with the Walls of Diocletian. They stretch in a vast circuit from the shore to the heights above the city, intended to cover the hills dominating the city and the approaches from the north, as well as to secure important sources of water. These walls were consistently built in a masonry of rubble and brick bands which much resembles that of a slightly older wall of Nicaea. With a length of over 6 km, the Walls of Diocletian were built on a scale larger than any other part of the fortification. Only the upper parts, at and above the level of the Fortress, survive, the rest having succumbed to the expansion of the modern town. The examples of Constantinople and Thessalonica suggest that the walls would have continued along the shore but, if so, they have long disappeared.</p> <p>The most extensive remains are on the hill northeast of the Fortress where a long trace, mostly dilapidated survives. It culminates in a large square tower which still stands.</p> <p>The Outer Wall (<i>proteichsma</i>) reinforced the Byzantine walls in at least two vulnerable points. Only a small section of the north Outer wall has been preserved.</p> <p>The walls of Diocletian seem to have been abandoned by the 7<sup>th</sup> c., and perhaps as early as the mid-fourth c. Once the capital was moved to Constantinople it would no longer have been necessary to maintain such a vast circuit for a city which was now only provincial. It is likely that the great earthquake of 358 brought more damage to these walls than could be repaired.</p> <p>In the next five centuries, Nicomedia was a major military base and an important bulwark for the defense of the Constantinople. Yet no source before the 12<sup>th</sup> c mentions the walls, nor has any section</p>

	<p>survived which bear the certain characteristics of the Dark Ages or the Macedonian period. Only two small sections use a facing of regularly arranged spoils which could belong to the 7<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> c. One can suppose that the defenses of early medieval Nicomedia made extensive use of the standing circuit. The most abundant remains, visible in every part of the Byzantine walls, are in styles of masonry that corresponds to the age of the Komneni but the chronology is impossible to determinate; Clive Foss assigns these repairs to the reign of Manuel I Komnenos (1143-1180).</p> <p>In 1204, Latins found the walls in ruins and repaired them. The emperors of the Lascarid dynasty were responsible for the next rebuilding stage, limited to outer shells and a number of towers. Finally, two or three last phases of construction may be assigned to the early Ottoman period. For instance, the triangular citadel added to the northeast corner of the fortification belongs most probably to the reign of the sultan Mehmet II the Conqueror. The walls were still standing in the mid-sixteenth century but seem to have been abandoned a century later.</p>
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<p><b>9. Archaeological Monuments / museums:</b></p>	<p>Little excavation has taken place, and much of what could be seen in the last century is no longer visible.</p> <p>The earliest known rescue excavation in Nicomedia was carried out in 1943, when work began on the building of the Izmit Paper factory (SEKA). It was possible to dig up remnants of a public bath and agora from the Roman period. The moveable archaeological materials were unearthed and transported to the Istanbul Archaeological Museums and would become the focus of several publications later on.</p> <p>Until 1967, all excavations in Kocaeli and its environs-whether prompted by coincidental discoveries or by the urgent need to conduct a rescue excavation- were conducted under the auspices of the Istanbul Archaeological Museum and finds were transferred to Istanbul. But the establishment of an Archaeological Museum in Kocaeli paved the way for further excavations.</p> <p>Archaeological surveys have been carried out since 2005 by the Kocaeli University-Izmit and numerous architectural fragments have been found.</p> <p>Vestiges of a Hellenistic building of unknown function have come to light. Along the contours of Nicomedia's hilly site stretches of the walls still exist. At their NE limit are the remains of a high tower, and beside this is the gate to the road leading N to the Euxine.</p> <p>Marble elements of a very large nymphaeum of the 2d c. A.D. have been found (Istanbul street), and E of the city there are the remains of two if not three aqueducts, one of which appears to rest on foundations of Hellenistic date. Libanius speaks of the copious supply of water to Nicomedia in the 4th c. A.D.</p> <p>In the E district of the city, at the old Jewish cemetery, there are the ruins of a late Roman cistern of considerable size, built of reduplicated bays roofed with saucer domes of brick carried on piers. Major ancient drains were in use in Izmit until 1933.</p> <p>Objects and artefacts from Nicomedia can be seen in the archaeological museums of Istanbul and Izmir like in the Kocaeli Museum of Archaeology and Ethnography displaying collections from Palaeolithic, Hellenistic, Roman, Byzantine and Ottoman periods.</p>
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<b>10. Textual sources:</b>	<p>Constantine Porphyrogenitus, <i>De Thematibus</i>, A. Petrusi (ed), Vatican 1952.</p> <p>Eusebius, <i>Historia ecclesiastica</i>, K. Lake (ed), London 1926.</p> <p>Evliya Çelebi, <i>Seyahatname</i>, Istanbul 1314AH.</p> <p>Lactanius, <i>De Mortibus Persecutorum</i>, J. L. Creed (ed), Oxford 1984.</p> <p>Libanius, <i>Autobiography (Oration I)</i>, A. F. Norman (ed), Oxford 1965.</p> <p>Odo of Deuil, <i>De profectioe Ludovici VII in orientem</i>, V. Berry (ed), New York 1948.</p> <p>Pachymeres George, <i>Relations historiques</i>, A. Failler and V. Laurent (eds), Paris 1984.</p> <p>Planudes Maximus, <i>Epistulae</i>, M. Treu (ed), Breslau 1886.</p> <p>Sozomen, <i>Historia ecclesiastica</i>, J. Bidez and G.Hansen (eds), Berlin 1960.</p>
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<b>11. Bibliography:</b>	<p>Çalık Ross A., <i>Ancient İzmit Nicomedia</i>, Istanbul 2007.</p> <p>Foss C., “Nicomedia and Constantinople”, in Mango C. (ed) <i>Constantinople and its Hinterland</i>, Ashgate 1995, pp.181-190.</p> <p>Foss C., <i>Survey of Medieval Castles of Anatolia II, Nicomedia</i>, Ankara 1996.</p> <p>Guinea Díaz P., <i>Nicea : ciudad y territorio en la Bitinia romana</i>, Huelva1997.</p> <p>Magie D., <i>Roman Rule in Asia Minor</i>, Princeton 1950.</p> <p>Moore F. G., “Three Canal Projects, Roman and Byzantine,” <i>AJA</i> 54, 1950, pp. 97-111.</p> <p>Ricci A., “Architettura costantiniana a Costantinopoli”, in <i>Costantino I Enciclopedia costantiniana sulla figura e l'immagine dell'imperatore del cosiddetto editto di Milano 313-2013</i>, pp. 759-775.</p> <p>Sherwin-White A. M., <i>The Letters of Pliny</i>, Baltimore 1966.</p> <p>Ward-Perkins J., “Nicomedia and the marble trade”, <i>PBSR</i> 48, Rome 1980, pp. 23-69.</p>
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<b>12. Links:</b>	<p><a href="https://www.academia.edu/Documents/in/Nicomedia">https://www.academia.edu/Documents/in/Nicomedia</a></p> <p><a href="http://www.kultur.gov.tr/EN,39598/kocaeli-museums-and-ruins.html">http://www.kultur.gov.tr/EN,39598/kocaeli-museums-and-ruins.html</a></p> <p><a href="http://www.kocaeliisepen.gov.tr/default_b0.aspx?content=48">http://www.kocaeliisepen.gov.tr/default_b0.aspx?content=48</a></p> <p><a href="https://goturkey.com/en/pages/content/2992/attractions">https://goturkey.com/en/pages/content/2992/attractions</a></p>
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<b>13. Visual material:</b>	<p><b>1. Figure</b> Nicomedia, Plan of the Walls of Diocletian and the Byzantine walls, taken from Foss C., <i>Survey of Medieval Castles of Anatolia II, Nicomedia</i>, 1996.</p> <p><b>2. Figure</b> Nicomedia, Plan of the Byzantine Walls and Citadel, taken from Foss C., <i>Survey of Medieval Castles of Anatolia II, Nicomedia</i>, 1996.</p> <p><b>3. Figure</b> Reconstruction of ancient Nicomedia, done by Onur Şahna, taken from Çalık Ross A., <i>Ancient İzmit</i>, 2007.</p> <p><b>4. Figure</b> Nicomedia, Remains of the Palace of Diocletian, taken from Texier C., <i>Asie mineure: description géographique, historique et archéologique des provinces et des villes de la Chersonnèse d'Asie</i>, 1842.</p>
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	<p><b>5. Figure</b> Portrait of Diocletian with an oak leaf crown, 270-275, Istanbul Archaeological Museums.</p> <p><b>6. Figure</b> Satelite view of Izmit</p> <p><b>7. Figure</b> Gulf of Izmit, Satelite View</p> <p><b>8. Figure</b> Modern Izmit, Panorama of the city</p>
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<b>14. Writer/date:</b>	Ivana Jevtic, 26/12/2015.
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